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## NORTHERN IRELAND INFORMATION SERVICE

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16 July 2003

### CHILCOT REPORT ON CASTLEREAGH BREAK-IN

The Government has very recently received Sir John Chilcot's report into the issues arising from the break-in at the Special Branch office in Castlereagh PSNI station last March.

Commenting today on Sir John's report in a written Ministerial statement to Parliament, the Secretary of State, Paul Murphy said:

**"In identifying weaknesses in national security arrangements exposed by the break-in, this report makes a number of observations and recommendations.**

**"There has, over the months, been a significant degree of speculation about who might have been involved in this incident, including allegations of collusion. I can confirm that the review did not uncover any evidence whatever that members of Government agencies were in any way involved in this incident, although the police investigation is continuing.**

**"The review was also able to provide a satisfactory assurance about the quality of the police investigation, confirming the conclusions of a separate review of the professional quality and standard of the investigation, carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service last year at the request of the PSNI.**

**"The report came to certain conclusions about how the incident might have occurred and made recommendations about how to avoid any similar incidents happening in the future. I am sure that the House will recognise that I am constrained by the wider aspects and implications of national security from going into any detail on these matters. But I shall be considering the matters raised in the report with the greatest care."**

Mr Murphy thanked Sir John and Colin Smith for producing a comprehensive report **"which provides a solid basis on which to move forward"**

#### Notes to editors

- 1 Following the break-in at the Special Branch office in Castlereagh on 17 March 2002, the then Secretary of State, Dr John Reid asked Sir John Chilcot and Colin Smith, a former HM Inspector of Constabulary, to conduct a review into issues

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arising from the break-in. The terms of reference were to establish:

- how unauthorised access was gained to a Special Branch office;
  - the extent of any damage caused to national security;
  - the adequacy of action subsequently taken to mitigate any such damage and to prevent unauthorised access there and in similar buildings elsewhere in Northern Ireland;
  - any wider lessons to be learnt; and to make recommendations.
- 2 The review ran in parallel with the criminal investigation conducted by the PSNI.
  - 3 The inquiry was launched on 20 March 2002.
  - 4 Given the nature of the review, the report will not be published.